

MUSIC: A PORTRAIT OF WOMAN

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MUSIC: A PORTRAIT OF WOMAN

A

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ABSTRACT

Music in today's society is ubiquitous. It is in the car, the cinema, on television, in the doctor's office, in the home, on the other end of the phone; it really is everywhere. Music arguably is a large part of culture and as such, has the ability to construct social realities. In hopes to understand how media constructs the image of the female, a contextual analysis was performed on the lyrics of the top twenty-five country and pop songs according to Billboard.com. This was done using Grounded Theory through the employment of coding. Results showed that although country and pop music depict women in a slightly different manner, they both for the most part depict women in traditional gender roles. Furthermore, the propitiation and adherence to traditional gender roles sustain and conciliate patriarchy. Therefore the depictions of women in the music lyrics were then analyzed as processes of patriarchy.

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Introduction

According to a study published in the Kaiser Family Foundations report (Rideout et al., 2010), *Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8 to 18 year olds*, America's youth consume an average of 10 hours and 45 minutes of media a day. Of this time, two hours and nineteen minutes are devoted solely to music consumption (p. 28). Music in today's society is ubiquitous. It is in the car, the cinema, on television, in the doctor's office, in the home, on the other end of the phone; it really is everywhere. With music saturating so much of society, it causes one to wonder how music helps shape society. Brooks and Hebert (2006) state, "in our consumption-oriented mediated society, much of what comes to pass as important is based often on the stories produced and disseminated by media institutions" (p. 297). In other words, media, institutions such as television, advertising, print media and music influence what society values.

As an undergraduate student at the University of Alaska Fairbanks with a B.A. in Sociology, a minor in Women's Studies, and a current graduate student of the Masters of Arts Degree Program in Professional Communication, I have been given the opportunity and the tools needed to critically think about the world around me. Furthermore, my current role as a Teaching Assistant for the Communication Department has given me the opportunity to interact with young people who, for the most part, see the world very differently than I do. As a

Teaching Assistant teaching a course in group communication, I have been given the opportunity to discuss issues of diversity (including gender) frequently with students who come from different backgrounds and vary in age. It is this interaction with students that initially sparked my interest in how the media, specifically country and pop music, influence our perception of the world. While discussing issues of diversity, such as gender, with my students, musicians and music would often come up in discussion. The age difference between me and most of my students is significant enough to create a generation gap. I attribute most of my musical ignorance to this gap. Most of the students' viewpoints on gender are a mixture of traditional and nontraditional ideals. There is a perceived difference between the view points of the younger students and that of the nontraditional students. While I am aware of how popular culture helps create reality, I was unaware of how gender was expressed, especially regarding females in popular culture today. Therefore, this study seeks to explore how current pop music and country music depicts women.

In order to adequately explore this subject a review of literature was performed. The review of literature covers depiction of women in the media. The review of literature does not cover any theoretical perspective due to the nature of grounded theory. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2011), "Emergent theory is 'grounded in' the relationships between data and the categories to which they are coded" (p. 250). This means that the theory that will be used to explore the data

does not emerge until the data is coded. For this reason, the emergent theory, depiction of women in music as a patriarchal process, will be briefly discussed in the results section and elaborated on in the discussion. After the review of literature, the methodology and grounded theory are discussed in chapter two. Following chapter two, chapter three discusses the results. In the results section, the emergent categories that were formed through the process of grounded theory are explained as well as the emergent theme introduced. Finally chapter four is the discussion chapter where patriarchy and the patriarchal process are discussed. The emergent categories are then revisited and the relationship between these depictions of women and the patriarchal process is then explored, followed by a conclusion, limitations of study and implications of further research.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

“Music is the electrical soil in which the spirit lives, thinks, and invents.”

(Ludwig van Beethoven)

There are three principle purposes for the review of literature: a) to ensure that the research question has not already been answered; b) the review of literature is useful in understanding what if any, research has already been done on aspects of the research question; c) the research question will show any gaps in the current research that need to be addressed. With this in mind, a systematic review of literature was conducted prior to starting the research. Most of the review was performed using Academic Search Premier using search terms such as music, depiction, women, and gender. During the review two dominant themes emerged: (a) musical depiction of women, and (b) media’s depiction of women.

1.1 Media: The Portrait of Woman

According to Holtzman (2000), entertainment media is a central source of gender socialization. In other words, women and men learn the correct way to act and feel, in large part by the ways media portrays the two sexes. For this reason, the depiction of females in the media becomes an important issue in understanding how and why women are marginalized in the United States

patriarchal society. The following are some ways in which women have been depicted in the general media. According to Holtzman (2000), women are seen as primarily focused on their relationship throughout all forms of media such as television, books, film and music. Women are also seen as relationship seeking more than men in film and television. In addition on television and in film, women's appearances are more likely to be discussed than men's and 46 percent of women have the thin ideal body type compared to only 16 percent of the men.

1.1.1 Music

The review of literature revealed that there has been some significant work done on how music portrays women. Much of the literature found on the depiction of women in the media talked about the singers themselves. For example, Borisoff and Chesebro (2011) discuss the impact that three women performers have on the construction of femininity through themselves as performers as well as through their music. The first performer discussed was Madonna. Madonna, they argued, depicts femininity as unpredictable and ever-changing, as is the human condition. Madonna chooses movie roles and songs that are often perceived as controversial and unladylike. It is through these roles and songs that the authors argue that Madonna reaffirms, “. . . femininity is not just compromised of roles viewed as a proper and ideal for a woman; it is also made

up of feminine images that include concepts and actions relevant to an active and ever-evolving human being” (p. 78).

Not unlike Madonna, Taylor Swift is also viewed by the authors as a powerhouse for conveying a portrait of femininity and as a medium for feminism. According to Borisoff and Chesebro, Swift portrays an innocent and precocious femininity while reinforcing feminist values by creating a unified feeling of power and strength within her audience. She does this by relentlessly reaching out to her audiences not only through song but also through social media networks such as MySpace (p. 79). Finally, Borisoff and Chesebro (2011) focus their attention on Lady Gaga. Lady Gaga seems to be a paradox of classic femininity and gender defiance. Part of her gender defiance is that she is business savvy in what is thought to be a predominately male field. In 2010, *Forbes Magazine* named Lady Gaga as one of the world’s 100 most powerful people while *Time Magazine* named her as one of the top 100 most influential people (as cited in, Borisoff and Chesebro, 2011). In addition, Lady Gaga often portrays herself through song and dance in an often vulgar and violent manner, breaking stereotypical images of femininity. In contrast, she is often seen wearing traditional feminine clothing such as makeup, stockings and heels. Lady Gaga conducts herself in the professional world with the traditional feminine grace.

In addition to the singers as the focus of how women are portrayed in music, the review of literature also revealed studies that explored the depiction of women in song lyrics. In one such study, content analysis was performed on the song lyrics of the Rolling Stones from the time of the bands beginning to the mid 1970's (August, 2009). Women in these songs are depicted as sexual objects, disregardable, subordinated, victimized, gold diggers, groupies, dangerous, and idealized fairy women. It is clear through their lyrics that, "the Stones saw women trying to escape subordination and tried to plant them firmly under male control" (p. 95). The Rolling Stones embrace patriarchy through their depiction of women in many of their songs. In contrast, the Stones also depict women in a favorable manner as women who are independent, smart, and active in their own love life. In conclusion, there are contradictions in the Rolling Stone's depiction of women. This illustrates the Stone's struggle in the desire to subordinate women and to embrace the new independent woman.

1.1.2 Television

Like the Rolling Stones portrayal of women, television also depicts women in ways that both embody the traditional roles of women and women who are rejecting those traditional roles while trying to navigate new ones. This portrayal of women can be seen in the women of the adult primetime cartoon, *The Simpsons*. Although the Simpsons are a fictitious cartoon family, the show was at

the top of the prime time charts and was ranked in the top three television shows ten times in the early 1990's. In addition, *The Simpsons* is now the "longest-running prime-time animated show as well as the longest-running prime-time situation comedy in television history surpassing the current record holder" (Henry, 2007, p. 273). With such popularity of the show, it would be fitting to assess the depiction of women in the show. To do so, Henry explores the depictions of three female characters, a) Marge Simpson, the mother; b) Lisa Simpson the daughter; and c) Selma Bouvier, Marge's sister and Lisa's aunt. All three of these females are depicted according to their relationship to men and or children. According to Henry, Selma is depicted as single, looking for the right man, and desiring motherhood. These are all traditional gender roles one might expect to see of a single female character. Selma does however break out of traditional roles in the episode *Selma's Choice* when she desires to have a child of her own and seeks impregnation from a sperm bank. This is clearly in stark contrast to the nuclear family ideal depicted throughout the TV show. In the end, however, Selma is shown taking Bart, Lisa, and Maggie to the amusement park resulting in a frustrating experience. Selma then voices her admiration of Marge and Marge's husband, Homer and announces her resignation in seeking to have a child on her own. This reinforces the importance of a nuclear family.

Marge Simpson embodies the traditional idealized mother while also enacting an independent feminist role. On one hand, she establishes herself "as

the consummate homemaker, house wife and mother her life is primarily defined by her private domestic space, and her primary functions revolve around tending to her home, her husband and her three children” (Henry, 2007, p. 284). On the other hand, Marge is often seen pursuing interests outside of the home and giving Homer lectures and insights on feminist issues such as sexual objectification of women.

Unlike Marge, Lisa Simpson does not waver in her feminist ideals. Lisa is often times seen lecturing her peers, parents and brother on various real-life feminist issues such as beauty as can be seen in the episode, *Lisa vs. Malibu Stacie*. In this episode Marge buys Lisa the much coveted talking Malibu Stacie doll. Lisa like the other girls is beside herself with excitement to try out the doll. Much to her dismay, Malibu Stacie spouts off sexist things about putting on makeup to look pretty, baking cookies for the boys, and how difficult school is. Furious, Lisa, the little feminist, makes it her mission to speak out against the doll and create a new doll that says intelligent relevant things. Although Lisa does not subscribe to the traditional ideals of girl, she is portrayed in a stereotypical feminist fashion; that is to say that she is depicted as an outsider, with minimal or no friends, and is seen by her peers brother, and father as very uncool. These are all stereotypical depictions of feminists. To conclude, *The Simpsons*, like the song lyrics of the Rolling Stones, depict a clash of the ideals of traditional gender roles and the new liberated woman.

Unlike the Simpsons, Wolf (1991) illustrates a different depiction of women in television. She suggests that women are depicted either as ' beauty-without-intelligence or intelligence-without-beauty" (p. 59). This dichotomy is illustrated in the depiction of Ginger and Mary Ann in *Gilligan's Island*, Janet and Chrissie in *Three's Company* and Mary and Rhonda in *Mary Tyler Moore*. Although these are all older television sitcoms the same could be said for many of today's sitcoms.

1.1.3 Film

Much like in music and TV, women in film are also portrayed in film as both wanting to be liberated independent women but also in the traditional ideals of femininity. These conflicting images can be seen in the films *The Sound of Music* and *Mary Poppins*. In both these films the protagonists are female nannies. While woman as a caregivers and nurturers are traditional roles the nannies in both movies are outspoken and not afraid to speak their mind to their male employers (McLeer, 2002). Although both nannies assert instances of independence and assertiveness, their overall role of keeping the family intact and working inside the private sphere depict them as the feminist ideal of mother, nurturer, caregiver, and domestic goddess.

In a much more blatant and overt manner, the movie *Stepford Wives* also depicts women as struggling against the patriarchal ideal of woman, motherhood

and wife. *Stepford Wives* is a film about a woman, Joanna, who moves to suburbia with her husband and finds herself submerged into a place where all the women are the perfect ideal housewife in temperament, action, and appearance. The Stepford wives are all similar in “. . . in their housework obsession, soft-spoken docility, voluptuous figures and frilly dresses” (Elliott, 2008, p. 36) Joanna soon realizes that these women are all robots made by the “men’s association” to replace the real wives. Joanna is horrified and tries initially to resist and then to escape, only to fall victim as the rest of the women had. The film ends with a new unsuspecting wife coming to town and Joanna strolling up and down the aisles, perfect in manner, temperament and appearance as all the other wives. Although the film depicts the desire of women to fight against the constringent patriarchal ideals of woman, it nonetheless shows the perils of what is to happen to women who fight against these ideals when Joanna is replaced by a perfect ideal fembot. The ending successfully illustrates “. . . patriarchal dominators as transgressing our most deep-seated understanding of the necessary balance between individual and social power” (p. 40), thus reinforcing societal allegiance to patriarchal ideals. The 2004 remake of this film takes this a bit further by casting Glenn Close as a woman who is fed up with the fast pace of a woman who works in the public sphere and sets out to retake the world for patriarchy. This not only illustrates to women “. . . that earning money power and status through a career ‘make[s]

people want to kill you' and doesn't really make you all that happy anyway" (p. 54) but also depicts women as the social force of patriarchy over men.

1.2 Intersectionality in the Representation of Women in the Media

Due to the nature of feminism, most feminist critiques of the representation of women in the media are driven by an understanding of the intersectionality of "woman" and how women are portrayed in the media.

According to Knudsen (2006), "Intersectionality may be defined as a theory to analyze how social and cultural categories intertwine. The relationships between gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, class and nationality are examined" (2006, p. 62). The following sections will illustrate how the use of intersectionality is illuminated in current literature.

1.2.1 Black Women in Media

1.2.1.1 General

Like most images found in media the black woman's images are largely composed of several categories based on stereotypes. According to Adams and Fuller (2006), these categories include images of "... mammy, the Sapphire, the tragic mulatto, the Matriarch, Jezebel, and the welfare queen (p. 246). Mammy is the portrayal of a large black woman whose entire identity is centered on caring for white children, children who she cares more for than her own. In addition, "...

. the Sapphire can be described as a socially aggressive woman who tries, through manipulation, to control her man. She is filled with attitude, has a fiery tongue, and she squashes the aspirations of her man or men in general” (p. 945). The Tragic Mulatto is a depiction of a woman who is a mixed race of white and black. She is defined often in popular culture as struggling with things such as self-hatred, alcoholism, suicide, and relationship issues. The Matriarch is a woman that is often seen emasculating males and depicting them as untrustworthy and undependable. She esteems motherhood as the most important thing in life while trying to protect her children from the racism of the world and teaching them the value of accepting it. Finally, she is also depicted as being very religious (Anderson, 1976). The Jezebel, on the other hand, is not often seen as religious, rather is depicted as an attractive black woman who uses her sexual attraction to get what she wants from men (Adams and Fuller, 2006). Finally, the Welfare Queen is often depicted as a black woman who has excessive amounts of children, dresses sloppily, does not want to get a job, and is proud to be on welfare.

1.2.1.2 Music

Most of the literature found concerning the depiction of black females in music discussed rap music. Rap music is notorious for the way artists depict women in the lyrics, music videos and through the self-depiction of the female

rappers themselves. In the discussion of black females in music, women rap artists will first be discussed.

Like many marginalized groups, black female rappers use the very tools used to oppress them in attempt to liberate themselves. This is true of many female rap artists as can be seen in Oware's (2009) content analysis of 44 rap songs sung by female rappers. Oware found that there were elements of female empowerment and agency in most of the songs, but they were overshadowed by the overt self-sexual objectification, self-exploitation and derogatory references towards other women. Oware found that most of the female rappers employed the same trademarks of their male counter parts. These trademarks include “. . . exaggerated braggadocio, consumption of drugs and ‘dissin’ of fellow female and male rap artists” (p. 787). In contrast, several of the songs were found to address serious female issues such as rape and violence against women. For example Eve's song, *Love is Blind*, addresses the beating, raping and killing of her friend. Female rap group Salt 'n Peppa also seek to empower through their lyrics in the song *Aint Nuthin but a She Thing*. They address women being seen as mere sexual objects and warn male and females against seeing women as such. The contradiction of messages of these female rappers are not unique to them but nonetheless contradict each other and negative messages are overpowered thus “. . . reproducing and upholding hegemonic sexist notions of femininity, and serving to undermine and disempower women” (p. 787).

There has been much research done in the way black women are represented on rap music. In one such study, content analysis was conducted on 403 rap songs. Five pervasive gender themes emerged (Weitzer and Kubrin, 2009). The first category, naming and shaming, consisted of songs that have derogatory song lyrics towards women and use offensive names for women such as chicken head, tramp, slut, shitty hoe, and prima dona bitch. The second category, sexual objectification, consisted of songs that alluded to or explicitly stated that women were only good for sex as in N.W.A's song, "Findum, Fuckum and Flee". The third category, distrust of women consisted of songs that referred to women being untrustworthy. They found that women were depicted as trying to "entrap, betray, exploit, or destroy men" (p. 16) through lying about such things as age, and rape. Women in this category are also depicted as femme fatales and try to entrap men by setting them up for assault, robbery or murder. Women as gold diggers also fall under the category of untrustworthy female. This subcategory consists of women being depicted as using their sexuality to seduce a man in order to better their economic status. The fourth category of legitimizing violence depicts women as victims and condones or even romanticizes violence against women. Finally the fifth category, women as prostitutes, men as pimps is as it sounds. It depicts women as prostitutes while celebrating men as pimps. In addition to this study, Collins (2004) discusses black women in music where she identifies Freak as an archetype. This archetype is often used by the black women

themselves as well as the black male rappers. According to Collins, Freak stems from the western ideals of African American proximity to wild animals, primitiveness and imagined wild sexual practices. The term has evolved from a term to reference black sexual promiscuity to being generalizable to all women. The black woman as “freak” can be seen in Missy Elliot’s song “Get Your Freak On”.

1.2.1.3 Television

Roles of Black women in television are narrow in scope and in depth. In the review of literature two emergent archetypes were discussed. The first archetype was black woman in a role of a “white good wife” or “lady”. (Brooks and Hebert, 2006, Collins, 2004) Claire Huxtable from the 1980’s sitcom, *The Cosby Show* is a perfect example of this. In the show the Huxtables are an upper middle class black family. The father, Dr. Huxtable, is a pediatrician and his wife, Claire, is an attorney. There are few references to the family as being black with the exception of some artwork and references to jazz music, either being listened to or played. Although the character of Claire is progressive in that she is an attorney, she establishes herself on the show primarily as a mother. She is always portrayed in reference to her husband and/or children and is never seen by the viewers at work. She portrays the idealistic classy heterosexual upper middle class mother. (Collins, 2004)

In addition to the good wife or lady, the archetype of modern day mammy also emerges. According to Collins (2004), this black woman is smart, strong, independent, and asexual. Unlike the traditional mammy who would do anything for the white master and his children even at the expense of her own family, this woman would do anything for her career and the organization for which she works. For this woman, career comes before family and love. An example of the modern day mammy is Oprah Winfrey. Oprah is openly devoted to her career, has no children and is rarely seen with her long time beau, Stedman Graham. The depiction of women into these two categories is problematic. Black women like all women, are far more complex and fluid than these two depictions suggest. Also, depicting women in such a narrow fashion reinforces narrow ideals into which black women need to conform in order to be seen as fulfilling societal expectations of what a black woman is and should be.

1.2.1.4 Film

Black women in film are depicted in various ways. Most depictions of black females in films rely heavily on stereotypes and most are negative. as in other forms of media and with other races, Black women are used in film as sexual props. These women are used for the sole purpose of reinforcing Black male heroes' images, as can be seen in the 1970's films *Super Fly* and *Shaft*. Another depiction of black woman in film is that of the black bitch. The black

bitch “. . . uses her looks, sexuality, intellect, and/or aggression in service to African American communities” (Collins, 2004, p. 125). Not unlike other races, black women are seen as no more than the sum of their parts. Collins (2004) points out that women’s bodies can be objectified as a whole or as single body parts like the black bootie reference in Spike Lee’s film *School Daze*. In addition, Black women are often depicted throughout film as Bad Black Mothers. These Bad Black Mothers are poor, working class, abusive, neglectful, single drug addicts who raise bad children. This depiction of black woman can be seen in the 1995 film *Losing Isaiah*. In this film Halle Berry plays a black woman who loses her son to a white woman played by Jessica Lange because she is high and abandons her son. Lastly, Collins discusses the Educated Black Bitch as a typical depiction of the Black woman in film. This woman is educated has money, power, and a good job. She is unlike the Modern Day Mammy that is seen in TV in that she is out for herself not for her employer or organization.

1.2.2 Native American and Alaskan Native Women

There is little research done on the media’s portrayal of Native American women and no research was found on the depiction of Alaskan Native Women. The most prolific portrait of Native American woman found in the research is the character of Pocahontas. Ono and Buescher (2001) describe the image of the Native American woman as beautiful, passionate and exotic or as dangerous and

powerful. This portrayal of Native American women is harmful in that it is a fixed image and does not allow for Native American women to be seen as more than that, and, It fixes their images as such in society, therein repressing their individuality. Furthermore, there is little or no research that was found on the depictions of Native Alaskan women nor did any of the depictions of Native American women reflect any sort of differences depending on tribe or area in which the Native American woman originates from. This is also problematic in that it fixes all Native American and Alaskan Native women as one without separate identities.

1.2.3 Latina Women

Not unlike Native American women, the depictions of Latina women are significantly underrepresented in research, and current research appears to be mostly on Latino men. Latina women seem to be more fluid in their representation. Valdivia (1995) points out that Latina women's identity as such is not always static, in that identity changes as access to power changes. This may be the result of two things; first, the more white the skin tone is, the more power one is assumed to have: and second, Latina is an ambiguous term covering a multiple of ethnicities, depending on the Latina woman's country of origin. In consequence, "a Latina can go from being white in Chile to being brown in

Pennsylvania to being “Italian” in Southern California, though her skin color remains the same” (p. 149).

1.2.3.1 Music

Studies on the depiction of Latinas in music primarily focus on the Latina singers themselves as opposed to the lyrical content. Latina women Shakira and Jennifer have gained much success in the world of pop music. Like many other singers, Shakira and Lopez are highly sexualized in their performances. In addition they are also highly sexually objectified with a heavy emphasis being on their hip and buttock area (Brooks and Hebert, 2006). It is interesting that the review of literature on Latinas in music has such a heavy emphasis on the sexualization of the women as opposed to the lyrical content of their songs.

1.2.3.2 Film

Not only does Jennifer Lopez have a successful music career, but she is also successful as an actress. Lopez is one of the few prominent Latina actresses and arguably the most famous. Latina women are highly underrepresented in American films and tend to play racially ambiguous parts. For the most part this is true for the roles that Lopez has played. With the exception of the 2003 film *Maid of Honor*, in which Lopez plays the role of maid which is stereotypical of Latina women, there are no racial or ethnic markers that would tag her as anything but

white in her other films. Furthermore, in most of her films Lopez is the love interest of white males. Latina women represented in such limited ethnically ambiguous roles teach women that the only acceptable way to be a woman is to be a white one or to accept the stereotype of domestic servanthood.

1.2.4 Asian Women

The portrayal of Asian women in the media has also been an under-researched phenomenon. According to Brooks and Hebert (2006), Asian women, like Latina and Native American women are often portrayed as oversexualized exotic women. Asian women are often represented as either quiet and submissive or as partners in crime, usually playing the role as a skilled martial artist. As in most cases, the depiction of Asian women in a fixed dichotomy is problematic. It aids in the social construction of Asian women as either as one or the other, and does not allow for them to be seen as fluid, dynamic, ever-changing individuals.

1.2.4.1 Television

Representation of Asian women on American television is vastly unrepresentative of the American population. This may be a reason for underdeveloped research. With this being said, limited depictions of Asian women were found. One depiction of Asian women can be found in Lucy Lui's character, Ling Woo, on the television show *Ally McBeal*. According to Brooks

and Hebert (2006), Ling Woo represents Asian women as Dragon Lady feisty, driven and “knowledgeable in the art of sexual pleasure” (p. 302). Another depiction of Asian women in television can be found on the television show *All American Girl* featuring Margret Cho as feisty assimilated Asian- American girl trying to navigate between the values and culture of her parents (Chinese immigrants) and her experience as a teenager in American suburbia. Cho’s character depicts Asian-American teenagers as not fitting in well and stuck between their cultures traditional ways and the American ideals.

1.2.4.2 Film

Film is also limited in the amount of Asian women roles available. Despite this, there seems to be more research available for the depiction of Asian women in film than there was for television documentary. For instance there is a documentary called *Slaying the Dragon* which documents Asian women representation in film. The documentation discovers Asian women are most likely to be depicted as dragon lady, industrious peasant, the geisha/ lotus blossom, or the “Connie Chung” anchorwoman, Valdivia (1995). According to Holtzman (2000), another common depiction is one of a beautiful exotic Asian woman involved in a tragic love with a white man. This depiction can be seen in the protagonist in the film *The World of Suzie Wong*, where a white male artist moves into a hotel and falls in love with an Asian prostitute Suzie Wong. Finally, the

film, *The Joy Luck Club* portrays complex Chinese American women learning of their ancestor's pilgrimage to America and their struggles to become assimilated (Holtzman) much like Cho's character in the television show, *All American Girl*.

1.3 Rationale of Study

To conclude, the review of literature indicates there has been significant research showing that media affects the way people view their world. According to Brooks and Hebert (2006), “. . . individuals construct their social identities, [and] how they come to understand what it means to be male, female, black, white, Asian, Latino, Native American—even rural or urban—is shaped by commodified texts produced by media for audiences that are increasingly segmented by the social constructions of race and gender” (p. 297). In addition, there has also been much research regarding the depiction of women in the media. Most of the research found on women in the media focuses mainly on media forms such as television, music videos, and cinema. Furthermore, most of the research focuses on women in accordance to their race and ethnicity. After an extensive review of the literature, it was found that the following two areas lacked sufficient research: (a) depiction of women in current music independent of race and (b) depiction of women specifically in country music and pop music.

RQ1. How are women depicted in pop music lyrics?

RQ2. How are women depicted in country music lyrics?

Chapter 2

Methodology

“Ye that are of good understanding, mot the doctrine that is hidden under the veil of the strange verses”

(Dante Alighieri, The Divine Comedy)

When attempting to answer a research question there are many ways and methods that the researcher can use to properly explore and explain and the question. The methods chosen will depend on the theoretical framework that is influenced by the researcher’s epistemology. The following sections will explore the methods, theoretical framework and the epistemology employed to answer the previously stated research questions.

2.1 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was discovered in the 1960’s by two researchers, Glaser and Strauss, in refutation to the current deductive modes of research that dominated their times. According to Blaikie (1993), “. . . Glaser and Strauss argued that sociological research methods in the 1960’s were primarily concerned with improving the accuracy of measurement and the rigorous testing of theory to what concept and hypotheses might be appropriate for the area under investigation” (p. 191). It is for this reason that Glaser and Strauss implemented a

theory that starts with observation and includes the entire research process in the formulation of theory. With this model of theory generation, it was their goal that qualitative research would be as rigorous and be seen as just as viable as statistical, quantitative research.

Grounded Theory is an analytical technique in which the researcher generates theory through an inductive process. According to Charmaz (2006), induction is defined as “. . . a type of reasoning that begins with study of a range of individual cases and extrapolates from them to form a conceptual category” (p. 188). Grounded theory begins with observations and through the researcher’s interaction with and saturation of the data, patterns develop and from those patterns a general hypothesis will be formed, resulting in the emergence of theory. Grounded theory is contrary to traditional modes of research where the theories are first identified, then the data is researched in reference to those theories. Grounded theory is premised on two things, “(1) Theory is grounded in the relationships between data and the categories into which they are coded; and (2) Codes and categories are mutable until late in the project because the researcher is still in the field and data from new experiences continue to alter the scope and terms of his or her analytical framework” (Lindlof and Taylor, 2011, p. 218). Furthermore, grounded theory requires more than simply putting data into categories; it also demands that the researcher constantly scrutinize their association between the data and the corresponding categories (Keyton, Bisel, and

Ozley, 2009). As a result, grounded theory requires that the researcher gather data, analyze, code, identify and interpret patterns, themes, and concepts that emerge from the data.

Grounded Theory is the analytical technique chosen to evaluate the depiction of women in pop music and country music for two reasons. First, grounded theory allowed for the song lyrics to be studied independent from a prescribed theory. Without predetermining or guessing what would be extrapolated in the lyrics. Secondly the process of Grounded Theory allowed the lyrics to “speak” for themselves.

2.2 Method

According to Crotty (1998), research methods are actual procedures or measures the researchers plan to employ. The concrete methods the researcher uses should be based on the methodology that was chosen for the research. With regard to this notion this study uses coding as the method to extract data from the source- music lyrics- for the emergence of theory. In grounded theory there are two types of coding, substantive or open coding and theoretical coding. Open coding is a process in which the researcher first interacts with the material and begins to analyze it into core categories. This is done through the researcher reading the material line by line critiquing it for meaning. In this process, the researcher highlights or annotates every adjective, adverb, verb, or noun that

references the subject being explored in the data. For example, a researcher studying how children's books depict children, the chosen books are read through line by line assessing them for reference to a child. All adverbs, verbs, adjectives, and nouns that referenced a child any way highlighted or annotated. The researcher repeats this until all references are annotated or highlighted. At this point, observable patterns or themes should start to emerge. Once the observable patterns have emerged, core categories are conceptualized and the words are then annotated under such categories. Once core categories have materialized, the researcher starts the process of theoretical sampling and selective process. It is during this process that the researcher begins selecting concepts from the data that are directly related to the core categories while disregarding the irrelevant data. Once the core categories are exhausted, the researcher moves to the process of theoretical saturation. This is achieved by the researcher constantly making comparisons between the data and the categories to insure the core category is fully developed. In addition to insuring that all the categories are fully developed, it is at this point that the researcher reviews all possible applicable theories. Finally the researcher moves on to theoretical coding, which is where the researcher applies the emergent theory to the data. Coding of the data is done through conceptual memoing (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Conceptual memoing happens throughout the coding process. Conceptual memoing is the process in which the researcher makes notes on any thoughts, questions or concerns dealing

with the data. Memoing allows the researcher to “. . . elaborate processes, assumptions and actions that are subsumed under [the] codes” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 261). It is through the memoing process that codes take on meanings and it also provides a way of organizing the data.

2.3 Data Collection

The top twenty-five pop music and country music songs for 2011, according to billboard.com, (Werde, Comer, Letkemann, Schneider and Ramirez, 1995), were chosen as the sample. Billboard.com is an online line form of the music publication that was launched in 1995 and features song charts, breaking music news, and artist interviews. Billboard.com uses a combination of sales, streaming, and radio play to determine what the top songs are and then compiles the results into charts. The music lyrics were found on various websites and were downloaded and printed off on January 14, 2012. The sample of top twenty-five songs out of the top one hundred songs were chosen because it allowed the research to be unbiased in the choice of song. Also the sample size of twenty-five songs was conducive to the time allotted for the research and large enough to allow for emergent themes to be found. Finally using the top twenty-five songs of both country and pop music allow for research to be done on music that is the most popular and therefore being listened to the most.

2.4 Data Analysis

Once the sample was selected, the song lyrics were found on azlyrics.com (“Azlyrics,” 2000-2012), elyrics.net (Elyrics.net,” 2000-2012), musicbarrack.com (“Music barrack,” 2000), cowboylyrics.com (“Cowboy lyrics.com,” 2012), lyricsshuddle.com (“Lyricshuddle,” 2004-2012), eyeslyrics.com (“Eyeslyrics,” 2012), metrolyrics.com (“Metrolyrics,” 2004-2012), and directlyrics.com (“DI lyrics,” 2005-2012). The reason for so many different lyric resources is that not all lyrics could be found on one source. The lyrics were then printed. Pop music lyrics and country music lyrics stayed separate throughout the research process. Once the lyrics were printed, open coding was employed. Open coding was implemented by the researcher interacting with the data through listening to the songs while reading the lyrics. All songs that did not have a female voice present in the song or did not reference female in the lyrics were disregarded. The remaining songs were separated into women singers, male singers, and duets or songs that had both female and male singers. The songs were then listened to and read through again repeatedly in order for the researcher to be fully saturated in the data/song lyrics. During this process, every verb, adverb and adjective referencing a female was highlighted with a yellow highlighter. After all songs had been thoroughly examined and highlighted, the words pertaining to gender were annotated on a separate paper under the male depicting female, female depicting female and male and female in one song depicting female. All specific

words were annotated as well as implied meanings as can be seen in Appendix A. Words or meanings that occurred in more than one song were annotated by tally marks. After this process was completed, the overall theme of the song, all words of relevance, and what seemed to be emerging themes were annotated under the song title. For example:

Last Friday Night (Perry et al., 2010, track 2)

Overall: party song sung by female

Explicit: stranger in my bead, pounding in my head, smell like a minibar, I'm screwed, black top blur, we danced on tabletops, took to many shots, think we kissed but I forgot, maxed out our credit cards and got kicked out of the bar, went streaking in the park, skinny dipping in the dark, I think we broke the law, my arrest, ménage a trois

Subliminal: blacked out party girl, masculine gender stereotypes such as rowdiness, drinking, anonyms sexual encounters, getting kicked out of the bars, broke the law, warrant out for arrest, active, sexually promiscuous

Grenade (Mars et al., 2010, track 1)

Overall: Break up song sung by male

Explicit: take, take, take it all, but you never five, should've known you was trouble, gave you all I had and you tossed it in the trash, I would die for you baby but you won't do the same, mad woman bad woman, you smile in my face then rip the brakes out my car, you're a liar

Subliminal: woman as heartbreaker and evil scornful traditional female gender role

This process of memo taking was done for all songs and was constantly compared to the original songs to ensure accuracy. Through the process of open coding and memo taking, the following two core categories were found in the data; (a) traditional female gender roles and nontraditional female gender roles. Once all possible core categories had emerged, theoretical sampling began. During this process, all words referencing women were separated into the two core categories. Following the emergence of the two core categories sub categories or themes such as Bad Girl, County Cutie, Bad Woman, and Gold Digger emerged under the core categories. As a part of theoretical saturation, and in order to maintain methodological concurrency, the lyrics and the categories were compared numerous times to ensure that the categories were thoroughly developed and that the categories accurately depicted the lyrical content. Furthermore, the lyrics were revisited often throughout the entire process.

Chapter 3

Results

This chapter briefly describes the emergent themes. First, the emergent themes found in country music are covered separated by female or male singers. Following the emergent themes in country music the emergent themes in pop music are covered followed by the findings chart that shows how the songs were categorized into the themes based on the previously discussed coding process. Finally a short introduction to the emergent theory, music as a patriarchal process, will be discussed.

3.1 Country Music

3.1.1 Male's Depiction

Out of the twenty-five chosen songs, nineteen of those were sung exclusively by males. Of those nineteen, nine of them depicted females in traditional gender roles. During the coding process the three following themes emerged: (a) Country cutie, (b) Family, and (c) The Prop. Three of the songs fell under nontraditional gender roles and can be categorized under the theme woman as Kryptonite, and two songs depicted females both in nontraditional gender roles and traditional gender roles.

3.1.1.1 Country Cutie

The term Country Cutie, is taken directly from the song, “Am I the Only One” (Bently, Beavers, and Randall, 2011, track 1). For the purpose of this study, incorporates any positive reference to a females’ appearance. This includes any body part, smile and overall references to attractiveness such as hot or pretty. Furthermore the word “country” carries stereotypes of American rurality. These stereotypes include rowdy, truck driving, beer drinking people who enjoy fishing as opposed to a city dweller that enjoys a nice night on the town, in nice close drinking dine wine. Five of the nineteen songs sung by men referred to the female’s appearance and or body parts. For example, in the song “Am I the Only One,” sung by Dierks Bently (Bently et al., 2011, track 1), refers to a woman walking into the a bar as a “county cutie with a rockin’ little booty.” The song “Barefoot Blue Jean Night” (Paslay, Altman, and Sawchuck, 2011, track 4), by Jake Owen, uses the adjective hot to describe women, as seen in the lyric: “the girls are always hot and the beer is ice cold” and also pretty, “ Blue eyes and auburn hair sittin lookin pretty...” Furthermore, Trace Adkins, when talking about his daughter in the song, “Just Fishin” (Beathard, Creswell, and Hill, 2011, track 5), states that, “she’s already pretty like her mama is” in her list of mentionable attributes.

3.1.1.2 Family

Four songs out of the 19 songs sung by men depicted women as mothers, wives, or daughters. These women are always depicted in relationship to men. Without a husband or a father these women would cease to exist. As can be seen in the following two examples, females as mothers and daughters are always shown in a positive way that reinforces societal beliefs that motherhood is fulfilling and that daughters should be sweet and pretty like their mothers. For example, in the song, “This,” (Rucker, Rogers, and DioGuardi, 2010, track 2), Darius Rucker sings about his mother passing and having an “angel” looking over him. In two of the songs including “This” the women were depicted as mother in reference to their daughter. In addition to singing about his mother, Ruckus portrays his daughter sleeping while her “mama is laughing in his arms”. As stated previously, Atkins also depicts the women in his song “Just Fishin” (Beathard et al., 2011, track 5), as mother and daughter, referring to both them in a positive manner and mentioning their beauty.

3.1.1.3 The Prop

The category of The Prop, for the purposes of this study, encompasses all songs that use females as a filler in the songs portraying no real identity or role. Three songs fit into this category. Rodney Atkins, in his song, “Take a Back Road” (Atkins and Laird, 2010, track 1) uses woman to help illustrate why

country living is better than urban. She has no real identity or role. Similarly, Zac Brown Band uses woman as a filler in their song “Knee Deep” (Brown, Durette, Bowles, and Steele, 2011, track 2). In their song woman is only referenced once: “had sweet love but I lost it/ she got too close so I fought it.” She is only referenced in accordance with him and to further his character. Finally, the song, “Dirt Road Anthem” (Gilbert and Ford, 2011, track 2), sung by Jason Aldean, uses woman to illustrate that his good life is filled with “bonfires and girls.”

3.1.1.4 Kryptonite

The category of Kryptonite is defined as a woman that is irresistible even though the male knows she is bad for him. The theme of Kryptonite can be seen in three of the songs. Kenny Chesney’s song “You and Tequila Make Me Crazy” (Chesney, 2010, track 4), illustrates this in the lyrics “you and tequila make me crazy/run like poison in my blood/one more night could kill me baby/one is one too many, one more is never enough.” Likewise, Jerrod Niemann portrays a slightly more demure version of woman as Kryptonite in his song “What Do You Want” (Nemann, Brown, and Bradshaw, 2010, track 6). In his song he portrays a woman that he keeps going back to just to have her break his heart over and over again. Finally, in his song “This” (Rucker et al., 2010, track 2), Rucker sings of girls who broke his heart and a girl in high school he loved but she “said that she could do better.”

3.1.1.5 Liminal Ladies

The Liminal Ladies category refers to women that are portrayed as having both traditional and nontraditional attributions. Trace Adkins, in his song, “Just Fishin,” (Beathard et al., 2011, track 5), depicts female as daughter and mother. His daughter fulfills both nontraditional and traditional gender roles in that she likes fishing, is active, rides bikes like traditional boys do but she also is “pretty like her mamma” has ballet slippers, and likes kittens. Also, Dierks Bentley likewise depicts women in both gender roles in his song “Am I the only One” (Bentley et al., 2011, track 1). He portrays the woman in his song traditionally as he calls attention to the fact that she is a “country cutie with a rockin’ little booty.” However, he also portrays her in a nontraditional female gender role in that she is active, vocal and a party girl. Four of nineteen songs sung by males had no reference towards females at all.

3.1.2 Females’ Depiction of Self

Out of the twenty-five chosen songs, only four of those songs were sung exclusively by females. Two of the four country songs sung by women illustrates two different stereotypical ways in which women deal with heartbreak. Although heartbreak is a gender neutral phenomenon, the way one responds to heartbreak is not.

3.1.2.1 Heartbroken

In Sarah Evans song, “A Little Bit Stronger,” (Laird, Lindsey, and Scott, 2010, track 2), she portrays herself as a woman who is trying to pick herself up after having her heart broken through the use of lyrics such as, “I know my heart will never be the same/not I’m telling myself I’ll be okay/even on my weakest days/ I get a little bit stronger.” This portrayal of women is stereotypical in that it illustrates women in admitting weakness, something a man stereotypically does not do. Similarly, woman was depicted as having a stereotypical reaction to heartbreak in the song, “You Lie” (Henningsen, Henningsen, and Henningsen, 2011, track 4), sung by The Band Perry. In contrast to Evans song however, “You Lie” (Henningsen et al., 2011, track 4), uses such lyrics as “I oughta kill you right now and do the whole wide world a service” to depict woman as angry and scornful. This is a stereotypical reaction in that it again like “you lie” (Henningsen et al., 2011, track 4), shows an emotional reaction. Although the display of anger is typically a masculine trait, the way in which the woman in this song displays her anger is an irrational reaction birthed from emotion, a stereotypical feminine trait. In addition to portraying a scornful heartbroken woman, the lyrics in “You Lie” (Henningsen et al., 2011, track 4), also refers to the stereotypical societal expectation that younger women are more desirable and that older women are resentful of that. This can be seen in the lyric, “ that ain’t my perfume, I bet she had a curfew.”

3.1.3 Duets

3.1.3.1 Virgin

Finally, two songs from the top twenty-five country hits of 2011 are duets sung by both male and female. Both of these songs depict women as virginal and innocent. Lady Antebellum song “Just A Kiss” (Scott, Kelley, Haywood, and Dallas, 2011, track 2), depicts a man and woman fighting temptation to do more than just kiss. She portrays herself as a virgin in the lyric “be the one I’ve been waiting for my whole life so baby I’m alright, with just a kiss goodnight.”

Although the song, “Don’t You Wanna Stay,” (Gibson, Jenkins, and Sellers, 2010, track 7), by Kelly Clarkson is similar in that it depicts women in an innocent virginal manner sung, the song is different in that Clarkson changes her mind by the end of the song. By the end of the song the lyrics change from: “Let’s take it slow/I don’t wanna move too fast/I don’t wanna just make love/I wanna make love last” to her posing question in conjunction with her partner, Aldean, “Don’t you wanna stay” and then both replying “yeah”. Not only does the song “don’t you wanna stay” portray women as virginal and innocent but it shows women as submissive and passive.

3.2 Pop Music

3.2.1 Male's Depiction of Female

Of the top twenty-five pop songs according to billboard.com, nine of those songs were sung by males. Of the songs sung by males two of them depicted females in traditional gender roles. These roles can be categorized into the following two categories: (1) Gold Digger and (2) Sexual Object. Two of the songs fell under the category of Bad Woman which is categorized under Nontraditional gender roles. The following three songs had no reference to females: (1) "Tonight (I'm Loving you)" (Iglesias, Christy, and Bridges, 2010, track 1) by Enrique Iglesias, (2) "Pumped Up Kicks" by *Foster the People* (Foster, 2009, track 2), and the "Good Life" (Tedder, Kutzler, Zanzanella, and Fisher, 2009, track 6), by *One Republic*. Finally, two of the songs, "Lighters" (Mathers et al., 2011, track 7), by *Bad Meets Evil* and "Stereo Hearts" (McCoy, Levin, Lowry, Malik, and Omelio 2011, track 4) by *Gym Class Heroes* depict females in neither traditional nor nontraditional gender roles.

3.2.1.1 Gold Digger

Current literature defines gold digger as women who use sex and her sexual appeal to better her social economic status. (Stephens and Phillips, 2003). It is out of this notion of women being financially dependent on men that the

traditional female gender role of gold digger is explicit stated in the lyric “oh shit she’s a gold digger,” in Cee-lo Green’s song, “Fuck You” (Brown, Mars, Green, Lawrence, and Levine, 2010, track 3).

3.2.1.2 Sex Object

Sexual object refers to women being depicted as purely as an object of sexual desire. Only one of the pop songs that were sung by males depicted women in such a way. This is not to say that the other songs and artists did not imply sexual desire for a woman but that only one of the songs, “Party Rock Anthem” (Gordy, Gordy, Listenbee, and Schroeder, 2010, track 2), sung by *LMFAO* depicted the woman purely as a sexual object. Party Rock Anthems lyrics, “she on my jock (huh) nonstop when we in the spot booty move away like she on the block” and “be the first girl to make me throw this cash” clearly illustrate sexual objectification of women and depicts the woman as a stripper.

3.2.1.3 Bad Woman

All songs that depicted women in ways that were in contrast to the stereotypical sweet, passive, submissive woman were placed under this category. This includes songs that depict women as cheaters, heartbreakers, and liars. Bad woman emerged in two of the songs. “Grenade,” (Mars, Lawrence, Levine, Brown, Kelly, and Wyatt, 2010, track 1) by Bruno Mars explicitly refers to the

woman that had broken his heart as bad woman in the following lyric: “Mad woman, bad woman that’s just what you are” and then goes on to call her in her a liar later on in the song. In addition Hot Chelle Rae’s song, “Tonight, Tonight” (Hot Chelle Rae, 2011, track 2), also depicts a woman as a heartbreaker in their lyric, “my girlfriend, went and cheated on me, she’s a California dime but it’s time for me to quit her.” Although this is much more of a mild depiction of bad woman than Mars’s it still portrays women in a negative fashion.

3.2.2 Females’ Depiction of Self

Eleven of the top twenty-five songs pop were sung by women. Of those, seven depicted female singers in what appeared to be as nontraditional gender roles. However, some of these songs use traditional gender roles in attempt to fight gender norms, These songs can be broken down into two categories (1) Bad Girl, and (2) Empowered. Seven of the songs can be placed in the Bad Girl category while three songs can be place under Empowered.

3.2.2.1 Bad Girl

For the purpose of this study the Bad Girl theme consists of the depiction of women as partiers, rock stars, overtly sexual beings, law breakers, or any depiction of women that is contrary to the traditional gender roles. The Bad Girl theme emerges in seven of the eleven pop songs. The subtheme, Partier, of the

theme Bad Girl, emerges in three of the songs. Katy Perry in her song “Last Friday Night” (Perry, Gottwald, Martin, McKee, 2010, track 2), portrays herself as a blacked out partier, portraying masculine gender types such as rowdiness, drinking, anonymous sexual encounters, getting kicked out of the bars, breaking the law, warrants out for her arrest and participating in sexually promiscuous activities such as ménage a trois. Likewise Kesha also portrays herself as a partier, a rock star who is confident in what she looks like and is sexually assertive. Finally, Pink also portrays herself as a partier in her song “Raise Your Glass” (Pink, Martin, and Shellback, 2010, track 7), by referring to herself as a “party crasher” and such lyrics as “ Slam slam oh hot damn what part of party don’t you understand”.

In addition to party girl as a sub theme of bad girl, the subtheme of overt sexuality emerges. Rhianna’s song S&M (Eriksen, Hermansen, Wilhem, and Dean, 2011, track 1), is arguably the most blatant expression of sexuality out of all the songs. In her song she depicts herself as very sexually open, expressive, and assertive through the use of such lyrics as, “Cause I maybe be bad but I’m perfectly good at it/ sex in the air I don’t care I love the smell of it/ sticks and stones may break my bones but chains and whips excite me.” Much like Rhianna, Nicki Minaj, also portrays herself as sexually assertive although in a less drastic manner in her song, “Super Bass” (Maraj, Johnson, and Dean, 2011, track 14). In her song she asserts herself as a sexually aggressive female and takes on

stereotypical masculine traits such as sexually objectifying others. In addition, Brittany Spears also fights the traditional female gender roles by asserting herself as an overtly sexual being in her song “ I Wanna Go” (Martin, Kotecha, and Shellback, 2009, track 3). Spears takes it one step further than the others in that she explicitly states, “There’s a countdown waiting for me to erupt time to blow out I’ve been told who I should do it with to keep both my and above the blanket when the lights out, shame on me to need release.” Here, Spears blatantly refers to the social stigma that is assigned to women who outwardly express sexual needs.

3.2.2.2 Empowerment

Empowerment for the purpose of this study refers to women as actively fighting gender norms and referring to do so in their songs. Although encouragement is oftentimes thought of as a female characteristic, empowerment is not. Traditional female gender roles call for women to be passive and to accept what life gives them, not to be aggressive, assertive and definitely not vocal. The singer, Pink, defies this role in her song, “Fuckin’ perfect” (Pink, Martin, and Shellback, 2010, track 18), where not only does she use masculine language but also encourages others to rise above society’s strict rules through exposing some of her problems. For example, she states that she was “mistaken always second guessing misunderstood Miss ‘no way it’s all good’ it didn’t slow me down” to show her struggles then goes on to offer words of encouragement in her lyrics

“pretty pretty please don’t you ever ever feel like you’re less than fuckin’ perfect.” Spears also shows empowerment in her song “I Wanna Go” (Martin et al., 2009, track 3), in that she sings about not wanting to be told who she is and how she should act. Unlike Pink though, Spears is focused primarily on herself.

3.2.2.3 Inspirational

Like Pink, Katy Perry’s song, “Firework” (Perry, 2009, track 4), is also inspirational. Unlike Pink, however Perry’s song falls under traditional gender roles in that she is very up lifting in a using lyrics that have nurturing undertones, talking about the heart and letting “your colors burst”. Only one song fell under the category of inspirational.

3.2.2.4 Broken Hearted Bitch

Not unlike the country songs, Adele also depicts herself a broken hearted woman who reacts in an emotionally charged manner after a break up. Adele portrays herself as a broken hearted, scornful, revengeful woman using such lyrics as, “See how I’ll leave, with every piece of you/don’t underestimate the things that I will do” (Adele and Epworth, 2010, track 10). As stated before, depicting women in this manner can be particularly damaging in that it shows that women are incapable of reacting or thinking in a logical manner and always react out of emotion.

3.2.2.5 Dynamic Women

Additionally two of the songs sung by females depict women in both nontraditional and traditional roles. In her song “Till the World Ends” (Gottwald, Martin, Kronlund, and Sebert, 2011, track 2), Spears depicts herself in traditional gender roles by objectifying herself, referring to herself a kitten and as a bitch. She also is sexually aggressive and expressive which are nontraditional female gender roles. Lady Gaga, like Brittany Spears, also portrays herself in a nontraditional gender role as sexually aggressive and expressive but also as love seeking which is a traditional female gender role in her song, “The Edge of Glory” (Germanotta, Garibay, and Blair, 2011, track 14). Finally, Niki Minaj is the only female artist that depicts another female in her lyrics. In her song, “Super Bass” (Maraj et al., 2011, track 14), Niki refers to a woman as ho, therefore placing the woman in a traditional gender role. “Ho” is classified as a traditional gender role in that the woman was placed in that category because she was assumed to be trying to steal Minaj’s male interest.

3.2.3 Duets

Five of the top twenty-five pop songs were sung by both males and females. Males depicted females in traditional roles and likewise the females depicted themselves in traditional roles in four of those songs. The males depiction of women can be categorized into three different themes (a) Subjugated

Woman with three songs (b) Sexualized Other, with one song, and (c) Good Woman with one song. The female singers in duets that depicted themselves in traditional gender roles can all be placed under the category of submissive woman. In one of the five songs, “Moves Like Jagger,” (Levine, Bianco, and Milak, 2011, track 13) sung by *Maroon 5* and Christina Aguilera, the male’s portrayal of female can also fall into the category of submissive woman but Aguilera portrays herself first in the traditional sexually bashful role and then through the progression of the song and becomes sexually assertive, fulfilling both the traditional and nontraditional roles.

In the song, “E.T.” (Perry, Gottwald, Martin and Coleman, 2010, track 8), by Katy Perry featuring Kanye West, West, portray Perry as weak submissive role through his use of such lyrics as “I mma disrobe you, Imma probe you see I abducted you so I tell ya what to do..” Perry then replies to him “. . . kiss me infect me with your love and fill me with your poison, take me, take me wanna be a victim ready for abduction.” This not only clearly states that West desires control over the woman but that she desires to be controlled and even abducted.

In addition to “E.T.” (Perry et al., 2010, track 8), the song, “You Make Me Feel” (Mac and Wroldsen, 2011, Track 2), sung by Cobra Starship, featuring Sabi, also depicts women as submissive by both the male and female singers. The male singer in the song depicts women as a submissive consolation prize that he

deserves. This is unequivocally clear in his lyrics, “I’m know for taking what I think I deserve and you’re overdue, ... get a little closer to me girl.” Likewise, Sabi also depicts herself as submissive as in the way that she is submissive and wants to please him as can be seen in her lyric, “everything you wasn’t so let me get up there, I’m the baddest baby in the atmosphere tell me what you want so we can do just what you like.” Although not as explicit as stating that she wants to be a victim, Sabi’s and cobra Starship’s depiction of woman is also damaging to women in that it reinforces that women be submissive to men leaving them not in control of their own lives and choices. These types of constructions are especially harmful in that women who subscribe to such notions are at an increased risk of abuse.

Maroon Five’s song, “Moves Like Jagger” (Levine et al., 2011, track 13), featuring Christina Aguilera also depicts woman as submissive. Woman depicted as weak or able to be controlled is shown by Maroon Five’s lyric “I don’t need to try to control you. Look into my eyes and I’ll own you.” In contrast however, Aguilera starts out depicting herself as wanting to be owned in the lyric, you wanna know how to make me smile, take control, own me just for the night” but then in her following lyric, “so watch and learn I won’t show you twice, head to toe, ooh baby rub me right” she depicts herself in the nontraditional role of sexually assertive woman. Aguilera’s portrayal of women although potentially

harmful and dangerous offers the alternative of a sexually assertive female, depicting herself as a complex fluid woman.

“Give Me Everything” (Armando, Wall, and Smith, 2011, track 2) a song sung by Pitbull featuring Ne-yo, Afrojack, and Nayer depicts women in traditional gender roles by both the male and female singers. The overall story of the song is that the male wants to engage in intercourse with a random woman and tries to persuade her into bed by saying that they may only have one night together to. The woman states no objection going as far as saying “Don’t care what they say or what games they play nothing is enough til I have your love,” in which the male replies, “let’s do it tonight”. This of course depicts women as sexual objects in that the male only wants to be with her for a night implying that he only wants her for sex. As previously discussed in the chapter sexual objectification is predominantly harmful in that it leads to people being viewed as objects leaving them more susceptible to be used, discarded , replaced or victims.

In the same way, The Black Eye Peas, song, “Just can’t get enough” (The Black Eyed Peas, Alvarez, Shadowen, Jenkins, and Frost, 2010, track 14), portrays women as the sexual desire of the male and as the female not satiated until she gets enough of him. Unlike Pitbull’s song, Fergie, displays sexual assertiveness in her lyrics “Boy I think about it every night, and day, I’m addicted, want to jump inside your love”. In contrast, “Will I Am,” the male

singer speaks of love and isn't looking for a one night stand, even referring to the woman as his queen. Although, "Just Can't Get Enough" is a song that expresses sexual desire it does not show the sexual objectification of either the male nor the female, depicting a more healthy portrayal of woman as an active participant in a romantic relationship.

The following table, (Table 1) is a list of the emergent categories and the words and phrases that the categories emerged from. As stated previously the categories or themes emerged through the process of coding. The table is a representation of that process. Also it is important to note that many of the songs and lyrics fall into multiple categories, however, the song lyrics and words are annotated under the most prominent themes.

Table 1. Emergent Themes

Category	Associated Words
Country Cutie	pretty, little, sweet, soft, angel, country cutie, pretty smile, sweet farmer's girl, hot, blue eyes, auburn hair, rockin booty,
Family	daughter, wife, momma
The Prop	grab my honey, she got so close so I fought it, call all the girls
Kryptonite	Like poison, crazy girl, " to come here and make love tonight cause you're feelin' lonely. You keep takin' me back, takin' me back where I've already been. When we wake up and say goodbye it's like I'm losing you again." "said she could do better"
Liminal Ladies	Pink rod and real, not sitting still, ballet shoes, training wheels, kittens, fishin, pretty like her mamma, "Yelled Who wants to dance and fired up the band and a shot of patron. She looked right at me and said What's it gonna be Are you gonna let me to party alone?"
Heart Broken	"feel the sting of the pain," "I'm trying to ignore the hurt," "Letting you drag my heart around" , I oughta kill you right now and do the whole wide world a service" " I outha kill you right now and do the whole wide world a service"
Virgin	" be the one I've been waiting for my whole life so baby I'm all right with just a kiss goodnight" "let's take it slow, I don't want to move too fast, I don't wanna just make love, I wanna make love last"
Gold Digger	"she's a gold digger"
Sex Object	"she on my jock (huh) nonstop when we in the spot botty move away like she on the block" " be the first girl to make me throw this cash"
Bad Woman	"mad woman, bad woman, that's just what you are," "went and cheated on me"

Table 1. Emergent Themes Continued

Bad Girl	Stranger in my bed, pounding in my head, smell like a minibar, I'm screwed, blacked out blur, we danced in tabletops, took too many shots, think we kissed but I forgot, kicked out of the bar, streaking in the park, skinny dipping in the dark, I think we broke the law, warrant out for my arrest ménage a trois, hot and dangerous, we runnin this town, you don't wanna mess with us, we are going hard just like the worls is ours, we're tearin it apart, we're superstars, sick of being serious, twllin you bout the shit we do, hittin, on dudes, party crasher, couse I may be bad, sex in the air I don't care I love the smell of it, sticks and stones may break my bones but chains and whips excite me, someone tell me who the eff I is I am Niki Menage, I mack them dude up, he just gotta give me that look then the panties commin off, shame on me to need release, there's a countt down waiting for me to erupt time to blow I've been told who I should do it with to keep my hands above the blanket, I wanna go al the way, taking my freak tonigh, show all the dirt I got running through my mind
Empowerment	“ mistaken always second guessing misunderstood Miss 'no way it's all good' it didn't slow me down, pretty pretty please don't you ever feel like you're less than fuckin perfect
Inspirational	Let your colors burst
Broken Hearted Bitch	There's a fire starting in my heart, bringing me out the dark, ill lay your shit barem see hiw I leave with every piece of you, don't underestimate the things that I will do, the scars of your love, Im going to make your heart burn,

3.2.4 Emergent Themes

As stated previously the purpose of grounded theory is to code the data, find emergent themes from those emergent themes, theory is generated and then applied to the data. Through the coding process the emergent themes of the songs clearly depict women in traditional gender roles and having traditional gender traits. Patriarchy relies on people's subscription of these roles therefore the song lyrics that fix the depiction of women in such ways are part of the patriarchal process. Patriarchy and the patriarchal process will be discussed in more detail and applied to the data in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Discussion

In this chapter patriarchy will be defined and the emergent theory of country and pop music as a process of patriarchy will be discussed and applied to the data. The music lyrics as a process of patriarchy emerged through the interaction between I, the researcher, and the data which includes the review of literature and the coding of song lyrics. My understanding of patriarchy from my undergraduate work in sociology and gender studies allowed for me to identify mechanisms of patriarchy in the emergent themes which lead to the formulation of country and pop music as a process of patriarchy. Once patriarchy and the process of patriarchy is fully developed and applied to the emergent themes, a brief theoretical exploration will be discussed and finally the limitations of the study as well as implications for future research.

4.1 Patriarchy

There are many ways in which patriarchy has been defined. For the purpose of this research patriarchy will be defined using Kate Millet's theory of patriarchy. Under Millet's (1969) definition of patriarchy, "sex is a status category with political implications" (p. 24). In other words, sex determines the individual's access to power. Henceforth a patriarchy is a government or society

in which males hold the power and women are subjugated. The two governing principles of patriarchy are that male's dominate both women and younger men. Furthermore under this theory of patriarchy, patriarchy serves as an ideology that socializes sexes into masculine and feminine. Masculinity then is defined as having such characteristics as aggressiveness, intellect, power, and value. Such characteristics are linked to qualities such as human accomplishment, determination and interest. In contrast, femininity is defined as having such traits as apathy, submissiveness, virtue, ignorance and incompetence. These traits are not indicative of power or accomplishment thus socializing the female sex into a subjugated status to men. This formation of gender identity according to Millet, “. . . is the sum total of the parents' the peers', and the culture's notions of what is appropriate to each gender by way of temperament, character interests, status, worth, gesture and expression” (p. 32). Furthermore, French philosopher Michel Foucault argues that patriarchy is not only sustained or propitiated through blatant subjugation but regulating conduct. The media regulates conduct by controlling what images are portrayed thus defining what is masculine and feminine. (as cited in Iyer, 2009).

Patriarchy is threatened in times of social unrest and changing social norms that happen in times of war or heightened social awareness. One way in which the media aids in the maintenance of patriarchy is to calm anxieties about the social unrest and changing social norms. This process can be seen in 1964

film *Mary Poppins* and 1959 film, *The Sound of Music*. These two movies conveyed the importance of family and the patriarchal unit during a time when the traditional domestic ideals of women were being challenged by both the civil rights movements and feminism. Both films depicted a family in peril due to the lack of influence the father had on the family. The jobs of both nannies were to come in and restore the father as a caring patriarch or modernize the role of father. According to McLeer (2002), “both films suggest that the fathers removed and disciplinary relationship with his children is at the root of nuclear family dysfunction and metonymically at the root of social and public problems” (p. 84). In addition, *Mary Poppins* reinforces patriarchy in that she is the catalyst to a mother who is more concerned with women suffrage than her own children this results in her children’s unsightly behavior. The nanny remedies this by good mothering thus reinforcing that motherhood should be placed above all other ambitions for women (McLeer, 2002).

Likewise the patriarchy is also reinforced in the sound of music by depiction of proper female roles. For instance, the nanny in the film, Maria wins the hearts of the motherless unruly children and brings harmony to the home with many of the same tactics as *Mary Poppins* did, through games and singing. Maria also wins over the heart of the captain over the rich, husband hunting, non-maternal fiancé. This also reinforces that women are most desirable and important when fulfilling the role of a proper mother. Maria is also shown to win over the

captain by “displaying the correct signifiers of the woman/wife/mother conflation of conservative 1960s America. She is attractive but not glamorous, nurturing but not afraid to get her hands dirty, fun but not frivolous, and resourceful but not independent. The baroness, in contrast, despises the children, is overly sexualized, and has her own source of income” (McLeer, 2002, p. 87).

In conclusion “*Mary Poppins* and the *Sound of Music* proffer that men needed to readjust and reassume their positions of power in the family and that the family should position itself as the bedrock of politics and society”(McLeer, 2002, p. 98). This reaffirms the need for the nuclear family in sustaining a patriarchal society. While these two films are an excellent example of media as a process of patriarchy in that these films depict family as essential to having a happy life therefore reinforcing the nuclear family and father as head. Finally, however hidden the process of patriarchy may be, “sexual dominion obtains nevertheless as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power” (Millet, 1969, p. 25).

4.2 Social Construction of Gender

Patriarchy is sustained and propitiated by people in society subscribing to traditional gender norms. Traditional gender norms or the appropriate way to act according to sex is taught through the social construction of gender. The social construction of gender is so pervasive in the U.S. that it is easily mistaken for

biology. Lorber (2009) reaffirms stating, “Gender is so pervasive that in our society we assume it is bred into our genes” (p. 112). According to Neubeck, Neubeck, and Glasberg (2006), Gender is the category of feminine and masculine based on sex, prescribed by society, that dictates the way people interact in the social world. Social construction is the way in which society dictates what are the appropriate actions and gender roles for males and females. Social construction is done through various institutions such as family, the education system and media. From the time of birth, people are being socially constructed to think and act a certain way. Boys are dressed in blue and are given trucks and planes to play with while girls are dressed in pink and given dolls to play with. People learn how to act by such things as watching their family, school, watching television, reading magazines and listening to music. This process goes on throughout their lives. According to Lorber, it is “In social interaction throughout their lives [that] individuals learn what is expected, see what is expected, act and react in expected ways and thus simultaneously construct and maintain the gender order” (2009, p. 113). Gender assignment to a sex category is so ingrained into our thought process that when one is unsure of someone’s gender it creates confusion resulting in array of emotions including fear and anger. Also, because gender is socially constructed and not a fixed biological entity it can be reconstructed through resistance and rebellion (Lorber, 2009).

Music is a part of social construction of gender. It helps construct ideals of love, heartbreak, relationships, and gender. Through the coding of the top 25 pop songs and the top 25 country songs it is apparent that all of these have very explicit depiction of women. Because the various depictions of women were recognizable as traditional or nontraditional roles the researcher concludes that the song lyrics participate in the social construction of women.

4.3 Traditional Female Gender Roles

As stated before patriarchy is sustained and propitiated through people subscribing to gender norms. Americans use gender and sex as one of the ways of dividing tasks among the people. In order to be seen as a well-adjusted “normal” member of society one must take on the appropriate gender role according to their sex. If one fails to comply with the appropriate roles they risk being seen as a rebel, abnormal, perverse or maladjusted. According to DeFransisco and Palczewski (2007), “gender refers to one’s self-identity-that is, how much a person associates herself or himself with the masculine or the feminine or both as prescribed by society” (p. 10). In other words society dictates what roles or actions are deemed masculine or feminine in accordance to one’s sex, through the process of social construction. Femininity is often defined in terms of the opposite of masculinity or as the other. Masculine traits include such qualities as, aggressiveness, action, independence, dominance, sexual

aggressiveness, and sexually promiscuity. As stated, femininity is defined as the opposite of masculinity meaning that feminine traits are typically related to dependence, weakness, shy, apologetic, virginal, moral, quiet, nurturing etc. In accordance, traditional gender roles correspond with traditional gender traits. Female gender roles reflect these traits and include roles like, mother, daughter, good girl, and bad girl. As stated previously, people who exhibit behaviors or traits that do not correspond with their gender risk repercussions. For example, women are called names such as “slut,” “tramp” and “ho” if she is sexually promiscuous or assertive. Women are also referred to as being spiteful, jealous, or scornful when they are show signs of aggression or anger as those traits are most commonly seen as male traits. Stigmatizing people in such a way is a way in which gender is socially constructed.

4.4 Emergent Theme

As a part of the grounded theory process, the data is analyzed through the process of coding. It is through this process that theory emerges. The emergent theory is then applied to the data. The coding of the 25 country music and pop music lyrics revealed that women are still largely portrayed as adhering to traditional gender roles that are necessary to keep patriarchy intact.

4.5 Country Music and Pop Music: A Patriarchal Process

Traditional gender roles, according to Millet (1969), birthright to power according to sex is done through the socialization of people to gender norms. Defining men by the gender of masculinity gives them access to power in that they are socialized into such behaviors as risk taking, independent thinking, and assertiveness. These behaviors are valued by society, thus putting men in a status above women who are defined as the opposite. Furthermore, traditional gender roles place women in domestic, nurturing and service roles. These roles are not as valued in society, leaving them at an economic disadvantage to men who occupy the power money-making jobs. It is clear that country music and pop music both depict women overwhelmingly in traditional roles. Even the songs that were sung by women that appeared empowering used the tools of patriarchy in attempts to assert their independence. Patriarchy is reliant on gender norms in order to remain intact; gender norms are enforced through social construction; media has been shown as a tool of social construction. These music lyrics clearly depict women in traditional roles more than nontraditional roles; therefore, country and pop music are patriarchal processes.

4.5.1 Processes of Patriarchy

Through the process of coding, country music and pop music had emergent categories that depicted women similarly. In this section the emergent traditional gender roles and traits found in the music will be discussed as well as how they are a part of the patriarchal process.

4.5.2 Country Cutie and Sex Object

4.5.2.1 Beauty Ideals

In today's American society one's self-identity is influenced largely by how one's image reflects the narrow beauty ideals. What society deems as beautiful is socially constructed therefore, subject to change as can be seen historically. According to Wolf (1991), these beauty ideals change as the status of women in a patriarchal society changes. The more advances women make in society or the greater their access to power is, the more stringent and unattainable the beauty ideals become. Accordingly, attractiveness has become a way that value is assigned to a woman instead of things such as professional accomplishment and intelligence. Females then spend their time and money on reaching these unattainable beauty ideals. According to Wolf, ". . . thirty-three thousand American women told researchers that they would rather lose ten to fifteen pounds than achieve any other goal (1991, p. 10). In addition Brumberg (1998)

when talking about her research states that the young girls in her study, “have learned from a very young age that the power of their gender was tied to what they looked like-and how sexy they were-than to character or achievement.” (p. 195). Society values people based on looks has the potential to breed inequalities. Armour reports “A worker with below-average looks tended to earn significantly less -- on average 9% less -- per hour than an above-average-looking employee. And those with above-average looks tended to earn 5% more than their average-looking colleagues” (1995). An emphasis is seen in many of the emergent categories in both country and pop music lyrics. Although women’s appearances were mentioned in the majority of the songs it has an overwhelming presence in the categories Country Cutie, and Sexual Object. Wolf states, “possibilities for women have become so open-ended that they threatened to destabilize the institutions on which a male dominated culture has depended and a collective panic reaction on the part of both sexes has forced a demand for counter images” (1991, p. 17). In another words at a time when women are reaching new levels of power, the pressure of adhering to the beauty ideals are more prevalent and reinforced by both men and women than ever before. This can be seen in the pervasiveness of words that reference women’s appearance in most the song lyrics. This exemplifies beauty as a process of patriarchy in that beauty is used to subjugate women and not men. Therefore both country music and pop music lyrics become part of the patriarchal process.

4.5.2.2 Sexual Objectification

In addition to beauty, both country songs and pop songs showed women being sexually objectified. The sexual objectifications of women by men were predominately seen in the categories of country cutie and sexual object. The sexual objectification of women saturates today's American culture, rendering the category of sexual object under the umbrella of traditional female gender roles. One cannot pick up a magazine or turn on the television without seeing a scantily clad woman holding some product for sale. Sexual objectification is a term used to describe the viewing of someone as a sexual object instead of as a whole person. The social construction of woman as a sexual object is dangerous because it devalues a person to the sum of their body parts dehumanizing them which often times leads to the mistreatment of the person that is being objectified. The social implications of such a damaging portrayal of woman can be devastating. Male desire for control of woman is often acted out in violence. Traditionally violence has been a way in which to maintain patriarchal order. Violence has been historically by men to conquer and dominate nations, men and women by the males who hold the access to power. The power status has been typically occupied by white heterosexual males. They have used violence in the advancement of their power status as well as maintaining it. Violence against women such as rape and domestic abuse is one way in which men assert dominance and control over women. Studies have shown that sexual

objectification is a key factor in violence against women. Not only does sexual objectification reduce women to objects but it also takes away their access to power by reinforcing stereotypes that women are to be looked at and treated like objects. They are not independent nor are they capable of human accomplishment.

4.5.3 Family

In addition to being attractive, American women traditionally have felt enormous societal pressure to become mothers. Americans have been socially constructed into believing motherhood is the single most fulfilling role of women. Although it is more acceptable for women to work outside of the home today more than ever and according to the United States Labor Department, Women in the labor force, (2011), women occupied 47% of the labor force in 2010, there is still an extreme amount of pressure for women to become mothers. Women are socially constructed as mothers from the time of childhood playing with dolls. The media is one way women are socially constructed into mothers. Hollywood seems to be obsessed with the notion of motherhood. Pick up any tabloid in the local supermarket and there is a good chance that there will be a segment featuring who the new happy, glowing, pregnant starlet is and who the depressed barren one is. Likewise, most commercials for babies depict a happy, smiling mother. Country music is no different. All of the country songs that depict women as mothers they portray the mothers in a very happy, almost angelic, way and thus aiding in the social construction of women as happy mothers.

As can be seen in the review of literature motherhood and the nuclear family are essential elements of patriarchy by reinforcing the importance of a father as the head of the household and woman as a nurturer primarily concerned with the caring of her children and husband. Similarly to the films *The Sound of Music* and *Mary Poppins*, country music also reinforces the importance of these family ideals thus being a form of the patriarchal process.

4.5.4 The Prop

According to French philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir, women are defined in accordance to their relation to men (de Beauvoir, 1970). That is men are men and women are not. Although de Beauvoir's second sex and ideas of the "other" were conceptualized decades ago, the idea of man as primary and woman as the other is still relevant today and can be seen in all aspects of society, including country music. This can be seen in country songs that use women only as a way of furthering the male character or as a prop for their story. Not only does the notion of the prop hurt women in portraying them with no identity independent of man but it also treats a woman like an object only to be used for the advancement of men. In addition it reinforces the ideal that men's identities are constructed through their interactions with their world not in accordance to women's interactions with them.

4.5.5 Kryptonite and the Bad Woman

In ancient Greek mythology, women were portrayed as seductresses who seduce unsuspecting men and use them according to the seductress's desires. Although this has changed a bit overtime women are still often times portrayed as man's Kryptonite. Country music's Kryptonic woman depiction of women and the Bad Woman of pop music both depict women as having powers over men. This implies that women need to be controlled or feared if they step out of the demure passive and submissive ways giving men the right to do so. Depicting women as or Kryptonite is harmful in that it is a fixed notion not giving women to be complex fluid individuals. It also creates an unequal power dynamic in that men can make active decisions in their love lives while women should not. This not only socially constructs women as passive and submissive partners but also women as powerful and dangerous when allowed to take an active decision making role in their love lives. In addition, women depicted as passive fixes the notion that women should be passive in a relationship. This is problematic because it opens them up to violence and keeps them subjected to men.

4.5.6 Heartbroken and the Revengeful/Broken Hearted Bitch

All of the country songs and one pop song sung exclusively by women depict themselves as reactors in their love lives not as active decision makers which reinforce the harmful image of woman as passive participants in their lives, where they are defined by man's interaction with them rather their interactions in the world. The revengeful broken hearted woman was the dominant depiction of the broken hearted in country and in pop music. All of these songs that portrayed and angry broken hearted woman depicted the woman as irrational and emotional. These depictions of women have been a common argument in why women shouldn't be leaders, CEO's, Presidents etc. For example if a woman in politics is crying she is portrayed by the media as emotional. In contrast if a male politician is moved to tears he is seen as caring and compassionate. Women's displays of emotions are appropriate for the private sphere and nurturing roles but not in the public sphere therefore because women are emotional reactors women are best suited for the private sphere.

4.5.7 Virgin

The image of the Virgin Mary has been used to socially construct women as virginal and promiscuous, sinful and immoral since the beginning of Christianity. As briefly discussed in chapter 3, two of country's top twenty five songs are sung by females, the picture of woman as virginal is problematic in that it depicts women falsely as non-sexual being stigmatizing women who express sexual desire. This is especially damaging in that it interferes with women's access to reproduction control and rights to her body by stigmatizing women who take control of their sexuality. The depiction of the virgin is essential in the patriarchy process. It is used to ensure the male dominance over female. The ability of women to give birth to a child can give her access to power if allowed. In order for patriarchy to be maintained males need to have heirs and must have access to power over them. To ensure this the virgin is used to ensure that men know who their children are therefore ensuring their patriarchal status in the family and subsequently society. In addition, the innocence of a virgin has long been used to construct women as passive and innocent. If women are socially constructed into thinking that they should be passive and innocent it has the potential to ensure that they do not misbehave or challenge authority, ensuring men's patriarchal status.

4.5.8 Gold Digger

Women have historically been financially dependent on men and only recently been in the public workforce in equal amounts as men. However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, and Smith, 2009), “in 2009, the female-to-male earnings ratio was .77, not statistically different from the 2008 ratio” (p. 12). The gender wage gap is closing but the ideals of males as being the breadwinner and as woman as financially dependent on him still remains intact. Gold Digger as previously stated refers to a woman that uses her sexuality to better her socioeconomic status. Although women who exhibit such sexual prowess are most often categorized as exhibiting nontraditional female gender roles, her economic dependence on men places the category of Gold Digger in the traditional gender role category. The social construction of women as Gold Digger, is problematic in that it fixes the image of woman as not being capable economic independence thus leaving her reliant on men. Patriarchy is reliant on women’s subjugation to men. Depicting women as economically dependent on men reinforces the notion that women should be happy with their subjugated status. Music lyrics that reinforce that concept then are a part of the patriarchal process.

4.5.9 Bad Girl and the Empowered

Although the title says girl, bad girl is meant to incorporate women of all ages that act outside of gender norms. Labeling the women as “bad” and social stigmatization for acting outside of gender norms is one way in which society socially constructs women to act in accordance of their traditional gender roles. All eleven pop songs that were sung by female pop singers depicted themselves in nontraditional gender roles and out of the 11 songs 7 of these songs were the image of Bad Girl. In all of these songs women showed that they were proud to be bad girls. Although these categories seem to be liberating on the surface many of the song lyrics use sexual objectification as a way of liberation. None of the song lyrics reference women’s intelligence or abilities to become equal members of society. In contrast most reference their looks and define themselves as partiers. Therefore, although the bad girl on the surface seems to be empowering the use of masculine markers such as objectification and focusing on beauty reinforces that women’s power and agency are defined by their adherence to societal standards of beauty thus reinforcing their subjugated status and music as a patriarchal process.

4.5.10 Dynamic Women and the Liminal Ladies

As stated before, in chapter three, Lady Gaga and Britney Spears both portray themselves in both traditional and nontraditional roles. In addition country music also depicted women in traditional and nontraditional roles in the same

song. Trace Adkins depicted his daughter both being feminine and masculine in his song, "Just Fishin" (Beathard et al., 2011, track 5). In addition, Dierks Bentley portrayed a woman who is a vocal and active but at the same time sexually objectifies her in his song, "Am I The Only One" (Bently et al., 2011, track 1). This is significant in that songs that depict women in such ways help show the reality that women like all humans are not fixed entities fitting one prescribed role or another. Nor are they dichotomous as in traditional or nontraditional but in contrary are fluid, dynamic, ever-changing, evolving individuals. In addition these songs show the struggle and anxiety has about changing gender norms.

4.5.11 Subjugated Woman

Five of the top twenty five songs were sung by both females and males. In all of these songs, men depict women as submissive. Women have been socially constructed as submissive in all aspects personal and professional. Women as submissive sexually emerged as the dominant theme in the pop music duets. All of the songs were centered in sexual desire. None of the songs showed women rebelling or challenging the men but in contrast striving to appease them. When the women sang, they all sang lyrics that reinforced the man already stated wishes. In addition the songs all had males as the dominant voice and the women as the other or supporting voice, reinforcing the social construction of women as

passive and submissive again reinforcing that men as the dominant sex and in the position of power.

4.6 Theoretical Exploration

4.6.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interaction, according to Littlejohn and Foss (2011), explores how reality is formed through social communication and focuses on participant observation and their interaction with the social world. In symbolic interaction people act according to how they subjectively understand a situation. Most of their understanding comes from symbols that have are given meaning from the participants primary group in society. In other words, objects have socially determined meanings (Littlejohn, 1996). For example, if the person is a Catholic, they may kiss the rosary because the rosary has been given significant meaning by other Catholics, while to others this may seem silly because to them it looks like a piece of jewelry.

Although the researcher looked at symbolic interaction as a possible emergent theory, it was disregarded as a viable one for the purpose of the research for a few reasons. The researcher was seeking to explore how women are depicted in pop music and in country music, through the coding of song lyrics. Symbolic interaction is focused on the participant with the object and its meaning, the

purpose of this research was to focus on women in music rather than on people's reaction to the meaning.

4.6.2 Critical Theory

Critical theory focuses on the lived experiences of people in context, examine social settings in reference to power and oppression and desires of an outcome of social action (Littlejohn, 1996). Critical theory investigates the social world and how oppression and power are created and maintained through the lived experiences of people. Critical theorists are not only interested in the social world but how institutions, interactions, and communication create and maintain inequities. The desired outcome of research done by critical theorists is to use the knowledge and employ social action. Critical theory is not applicable to this research for the following reasons: a) the research was not conducted in order to enact social change, b) the research does highlight inequalities it was not designed to do so, and c) this research focuses on lyrical content not the lived experiences of people.

4.7 Limitations

Limitations of this study are that the songs selected were only gathered from one year, as opposed to a random sampling over the last five years. This may prove problematic because 2010 songs may not be a good representation of

music trends in general. In addition, the use of twenty-five top songs for both country and pop music is a small sample and may not be a good exemplification of all of the songs. Finally, narrowing the research to only two charts is problematic in that it leaves all other genres of music out. With these limitations in mind the sample was still chosen because it is a large enough sample to depict trends. Also, pop music and country music are the most popular forms of music listened to by younger generations and those listeners ideals are the counties future ideals. Also, because both genres clearly depicted women in traditional roles that uphold patriarchy it can be assumed that this phenomenon is not genre specific.

4.8 Implications of Further Research

The depiction of women in pop and country music as a patriarchal process is understood it would be advantages to understand the role of music in the lived experiences of people. In addition, it would be advantageous to explore race, sexual orientation and identity in musical lyrics. Although there has been significant work done in the depiction of black women in rap music, research exploring women of other races in music is severely lacking especially in country and pop music. In this study only covered two genres of music therefore there needs to be more research done in other genres of music.

4.9 Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to explore how women in general independent of race, religion, or socioeconomic status are depicted in America pop and country music. The findings were that both country music and pop music depicted women in traditional gender norms that maintain patriarchy. The purpose was not to prove or to find that music is a part of the patriarchal process. With this being said, through the process of grounded theory and the coding of the literature, music as a patriarchal process emerged through the emergent themes. All of the emergent themes or categories depicted women in ways that help propitiate and maintain patriarchy. It is important to note that the depiction of women in such ways is not particularly harmful in itself but it is when women are fixed in these roles without other options and society's demand that people subscribe to these roles that is harmful.

The findings of this research project are relevant for many reasons. First, patriarchy and how it is maintained is underdeveloped and under researched. Second, understanding patriarchy as a process provides a framework to understand how it is maintained and propitiated. Also, looking back at the review of literature, it is clear that all forms of media portray women in ways that maintain patriarchy and due to the fact that there was no mention of that in the literature of review demonstrates the need for such research. Patriarchy is harmful

to all governments and people who subscribe to it. It is harmful to women in that it keeps them from being equal with men and it also harms men in fixing the definition of masculinity in the ability to dominate women and younger men. This creates enormous amount of pressure for men to be financially successful, independent, aggressive, assume leadership etc., leaving men who subscribe to other roles to risk repercussions. It is because patriarchy is problematic to all, that the understanding of how culture as a part of the patriarchal process is so important and the continuation of such research so necessary. To conclude, although this research was intended to do nothing more than understand how pop and country music depicts women, the findings that both country music and pop music are a part of the patriarchal process is a stepping stone to further research in how modern culture maintains and appeases patriarchy.

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Appendix A: Code Book 1

Country

Female depicting female: stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting female: stereotypical male gender roles

Female depicting selves in stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting selves in stereotypical male gender roles

Male depicting women in stereotypical male gender roles

Male depicting women in stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting other Female

- Younger women more desirable
- Home wrecker

Female depicting selves

- Angry ,
- Vengeful
- Active II
- Stronger
- Drink
- Smoke
- Tattoo
- Not the type you take home to mama
- Not the marrying type
- Heart broken
- Putting on a happy face
- Picking herself up (survivor)

Males depicting females

- Silly
- Crazy II
- Passive IIIII

- Attractive
- Party girl
- Active
- Bad for him * vixen
- *seductress
- Referred to as objects “my sunny day, my honey suckle
- Little
- Sweet II
- Soft
- Innocent
- Smile II
- Silent
- Daughter as: active, fishing, baller shoes, training wheels, kittens, pretty, drives the boys crazy (displays both gender roles)
- Daughter: doctor
- Daughter
- Wife
- Teacher
- Patriotic
- Angelic II
- Girl IIIII
- Submissive
- Told what to do
- Gazed upon
- Heart breaker
- Tease
- Heart breaker II
- Wife II
- mother

Doesn't explicitly state woman

III

Duets between male and female

Male:

- virginal innocent
- Man talking woman into staying with him

Female:

- virginal innocent II
- persuaded by man

Filler (no significant representation) II

Popular Music

Female depicting female in stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting female in stereotypical male gender roles

Female depicting selves in stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting selves in stereotypical male gender roles

Male depicting women in stereotypical male gender roles

Male depicting women in stereotypical female gender roles

Female depicting other Female

- ho

Female depicting selves

- blacked out
- partier III
- has anonymous sex
- broke the law
- kicked out of bars
- ménage tois
- law breaker
- warrant out for arrest
- active IIII
- broken hearted : revengeful , scornful

- sexually aggressive IIIII
- hitting on men II
- sex seeking
- focuses on appearance of males
- appearance conscience
- assertive IIIII
- empowered Sick of being told what to do and who she is: III
- bitch
- self- objectified: kitten
- dominatrix
- empowering others II
- love seeking

Males depicting females

- girl
- possession
- strippers
- heart breaker
- spiteful
- scornful
- object of love song
- bitch
- gold digger
- cheating
- attractive

Duets between male and female

Male:

- queen
- sexually desirable
- attractive

- mami (sexualized)
- sexy
- object of sexual desire III
- object to be owned
- controllable
- weak willed
- to be taken
- a consolation prize (he deserves her)
- girl

Female:

- desires man above all else
- sexually assertive III
- desires to be a victim
- wants to be dominated
- passive: wants things to happen to her
- active
- desires to be controlled
- says no at first then gives in (sexually)
- persuaded into sex assertiveness (passive to active)
- submissive
- passive

Filler (no significant representation) I

Doesn't explicitly state woman IIII

Appendix B: Code Book 2

Crazy Girl: (Rose and Brice, 2011, track 2)

Overall: heterosexual relationship

Explicit: crazy, silly

Subliminal: savior “I was livin’ life all wrong the smartest thing I ever did was to make you all mine”

Paranoid that he will leave her

Barefoot Blue Jean Night: (Paslay, et al., 2011, track 4)

Overall: Party song, heterosexual

Explicit: appearance mentioned four times, she drinks sweet tea while he drinks beer,

Passive,

Subliminal: waiting around for the boys, Girls hop in his truck

Take a back Road (Atkins and Laird, 2010, track 1)

Overall: wanting to leave the city for simple country life, heterosexual

Explicit: Baby, honey, baby’s hair

Subliminal: “grab my honey”: passive

Tomorrow: (Young, Meyers, and Smith, 2011, track 3)

Overall: Break up song

Doesn't explicitly state woman

*baby

You Lie (Henningsen et al., 2011, track 4)

Overall: break up song

Explicit: she had a curfew: young woman stealing lovers, young women more desirable

Subliminal: active

"I outhta kill you right now and do the whole wide world a servce" Angry woman

Am I the only one (Bently, et, al., 2011, track 1)

Overall: Party song

Explicit: country cutie, rocking little booty

Subliminal: attractive party girl; active

You and Tequila make me crazy (Chesney, 2010, track 4)

Overall: Troubled relationship heterosexual

Explicit: crazy, bad for him" like poison in his blood"

Subliminal: seductress pulls him in even when he knows it isn't good for him

*baby

Honey Bee (Atkins and Hayslip, 2011, track 1)

Overall: love song man to woman heterosexual

Explicit: girl, my soft and sweet, my glass of wine, my sunny day, my honey suckle

Smiling, Little, sugar, baby, "Your kiss said it all"

Subliminal: sweet, bright smile, innocence, silent and passive

Just fishin (Beathard et al., 2011, track 5)

Overall: father daughter relationship:

Explicit: daughter, pink rod and reel, not sitting still, ballet shoes, training wheels, kittens, fishin, day loves you baby, pretty like her mama, “drive the boys all crazy give her daddy fits”

Subliminal: both stereotypical boy and girl gender roles: pink rod, fishing, ballet, kittens, fishing

Appearance: pretty like her mamma, going to drive the boys crazy

Let me down easy (Nesler, Hanson and Dodson, 2010, track 7)

Overall: love song heterosexual

Explicit: “lookin’ like an angel,” lips, baby, girl,

Subliminal: man at the mercy of woman

Here for a good time (Straight, Straight, and Dillion, 2011, track 5)

Overall: party song

*no reference to woman

Knee Deep (Brown et al., 2011, track 2)

Overall: easy life/party

Explicit: woman referred to once, “had sweet love but I lost it, she got to close so I fought it, now I’m lost in the world trying to find me a better way.”

Just a kiss (Scott et al., 2011, track 2)

Overall: love song sung by both male and female heterosexual

Explicit:

Subliminal: virginal, innocent: self-proclaimed

If heaven wasn't so far away (Davidson, Hatch and Jones, 2011, track 3)

Overall: song about loss

Explicit: daughter, doctor, three girls lost

Subliminal: none

Made in America (Keith, 2011, track 1)

Overall: song about national pride

Explicit: she's that wife that decorates of the fourth of July but says everyday's independences day, she's golden rule teaches school some folks say it isn't cool but she says the pledge of allegiance anyway

Subliminal: old fashioned patriotic teacher and wife...typical gender roles

Country Girl (Shake it for me) (Davidson and Bryan, 2011, track 1)

Overall: party song sung by a male

Explicit: girl, go on now, get up on the hood.... Shake it for..... some sweet little farmers girl, wild pony tail, pretty smile.. now dance like, move like... all I wanna do is get to holdn you and get to knowin you and get to showin you and get to lolin ...baby you know what to do..

Subliminal: submissive, told what to do...men watching her, here to please the man, objectifying, sweet and innocent with a propensity to be wilde

Heart like mine (Howard, Lambert, and Monroe, 2011, track 12)

Overall:

Explicit; I aint the kind you take home to mama, I aint the kid to wear no ring, I always get stringer when im on my second drink, I smoke cigarettes, tattoo my brother got the brains of the family so I learned to sing, Christian

Subliminal: rebel, takes on many stereotypical male gender roles: smoking, not the kind t take home to mama, tattoo, smoking, stronger after drinking

God gave me you (Barnes, 2010, track 2)

Overall: Love song

Explicit: no reference towards women

Don't you wanna stay (Gibson et al., 2010, track 7),

Overall: love song: male and female duet

Explicit: hair falling slow, touching your skin, KC” let’s take it slow, I don’t wanna move to fast, I don’t wanna just make love, I wanna make love last”

Subliminal: typical female gender roles: wants a liong term relationship, innocence virginal

What do you want (Neimann et al., 2010, track 6)

Overall: broken heart

Explicit: woman not specifically mentioned but sings in the song with him, so I can be assumed that he is singing about her

“to come here and make love tonight cause you are feeling lonely”

Subliminal: woman broke man’s heart and is playing with him

A little bit stronger (Laird et al., 2010, track 2)

Overall: broken heart, woman singing

Explicit: Put a smile on my face, get a little stronger, im not giving you a hour or a second or another minute longer

Subliminal: broken hearted woman getting stronger after the memory has faded, picking herself back up after losing love

Long Hot Summer (Marx and Urban, 2011, track 4)

Overall: Love song

This (Rucker et al., 2010, track 2)

Overall: Love song, heterosexual

Explicit: Baby Girl (daughter) Mama laughing in my arms” ‘all the girls that broke my heart, like the gil that I loved in hight school who said I could do better...and the moment I almost fave up al lead me here to you, cried when my mama passed away, now I have an angel watching over me

Subliminal: typical gender roles: daughter, mother, girls breaking boys hearts, mother as angel

Mean (Swift, 2011, track 6)

Overall:

Explicit:

Subliminal: childlike

Dirt road Anthem (Gilbert and Ford, 2011, track 2)

Overall: easy life

Explicit: light the fire, call all the girls, he said she said

****POP MUSIC****

Party rock anthem (Gordy et al., 2010, track 2)

Overall: party song

Explicit: your girl, she on my jock booty move away like she on the block, first
fiel to make me throw this cash, your naked now

Subliminal: she belongs to him, women as strippers

Give Me Everything (Armando et al., 2011, track 2)

Overall: Party song featuring male and female singers

Explicit: queen for a night, baby im going to make you feel so good tonight, give
me everything tonight

Female singer: “Don’t care what they say or what fames they play nothing is
enough til I have your love, I want you tonight I want you to stay I want you
tonight”

Subliminal: woman as a sexual, she desires mans affection more than anything.

E.T (Perry et al., 2010, track 8)

Overall: Sex

Explicit: woman to male: infect me with your love, want to be a victim, want to
be abducted, want to feel your powers, you open my eyes, fill me with your
poison

Male to female: imma gonna disrobe you, probe you, tell you what you’re gonna
do

Subliminal: violence, male domination, woman wants to be victimized

Last Friday Night (Perry et al., 2010, track 2)

Overall: party song sung by female

Explicit: stranger in my bead, pounding in my head, smell like a minibar , Im
screwed, black top blur, we danced on tabletops, took to many shots, thi kissed
but I forgot, maxed out our credit cards and got kicked out of the bar, went

streaking in the park, skinny dipping in the dark, I think we broke the law, my arrest, ménage a trois

Subliminal: blacked out party girl, masculine gender stereotypes such as rowdiness, drinking, anonyms sexual encounters, getting kicked out of the bars, broke the law, warrant out for arrest, ménage a trois . active

Rolling in the deep (Adele and Epworth, 2010, track 10)

Overall: breakup song by female

Explicit: there's a fire starting in my heart, bringing me out the dark, go head and sell me out and I lay your shit bare, see how I leave with every piece of you, don't underestimate the things that I will do, the scars of your love, they leave me breathless I can't help feeling we could have had it all, you had my heart inside your hand. Baby, I have no story to be told but I've heard one on you, I'm gonna make your head burn

Subliminal: broken hearted scornful revengeful woman

Grenade (Mars et al., 2010, track 1)

Overall: Break up song sung by male

Explicit: take, take, take it all, but you never give, should've known you was trouble, gave you all I had and you tossed it in the trash, I would die for you baby but you won't do the same, mad woman bad woman, you smile in my face then rip the breaks out my car,, you're a liar

Subliminal: woman as heartbreaker and evil scorfll

Just can't get enough (The Black Eyed Peas et al., 2010, track 14)

Overall: love, sex by male and female

Explicit: Female: boy I think about it every night and day, I m addicted want to jump inside your love I wouldn't want to have it any other way, I m addicted and I just can't get enough, Lovie lovie yeah you know you are my demon, I love you long time so you know the meaning

Male: honey got her sexy on steamin, she give the hotness a new meanin, perfection mami you fleamin inception got a brother dreamin, damn baby I fienen, holla at you im screamin let me love you down this evenin girl work it for a team an', you could be the question, oh baby I can't come down so please come help me out you got me feelin hifh and I cant step off the cloud, honey, signed her name on my heart, she for me fishin for her love, bout her smile and the convo, she got me fellin like MR.ROBOTO

Subliminal: female is sexually assertive, male references females appearance often, references how she makes him feel often, baby, mami, sexy

Firework (Perry, 2009, track 4)

Overall: inspirational

No reference to woman

Super Bass (Maraj et al., track 14)

Overall: sexual

Explicit: Kind of dude I was lookin for, you'll get slapped of you're lookin ho, I said excuse me you're a hell of a guy, Im lovin your tie, somebody please tell me who the edd I is I am nicki minaj,, I mack them dudes up, you got my hearbeat runnin away, niggas, he just gotta give me that look, then the panties comin off

Subliminal: sexually aggressive female, calls other women ho's, takes on stereotypical masculine traits such as hitting on men, looking for sex, focusing on appearances

Moves like Jagger (Levine et al., 2011, track 13)

Overall: seduction male and female

Explicit: male: you wanted control so we waited I put on a show now I make it, take me by the tongue and Ill now you, kiss me til you're drunk and I ll show you, I don't need to try to control you look into my eyes and Ill own you, get in the car we can rid it wherever you want get inside it and you want to steer but im shifting gears and Ill take it from here and it goes like this

Female: you wanna know how to make me smile take control own me for the night, and if I share my secret you're gonna have to keep it nobody else can see this, so watch and learn I wont show you twice head to toe ooh baby rub me right but if I share my secret you're gonna have to keep it nobody else can see it

Subliminal: man in control, says no at first then gives in, desires to be controlled, becomes sexually assertive...passive then active

Tonight (I'm Lovin you) (Iglesias et al., 2010, track 1)

Overall: seduction

No reference to woman

We R who We R (Sebert, Coleman, Gottwald, Hindlin, and Levin, 2010, track 10)

Overall: party song

Explicit: hot and dangerous, we make the hipsters fall in love, got our hot pant on and up, we runnin this town just like a club you don't wanna mess with us, got Jesus on my necklace, glitter on my eyes, stocking ripped all up the side, looking sick and sexyfied, tonight were going hard, just like the world is outs, we're tearin it party, were super stars, we are who we are, were dancing like were dumb, our bodies go numb, be forever young, sick of being so serious, tellin you bout the shit we do , sellen our clothes sleepin in cars dressin it down hittin on dudes hard

Subliminal: party rockstar, stereotypical masculine gender roles such as partying, being assertive

References to being hot and sexy

Sexual virginal enchantress bitch ho

I wanna go (Martin et al., 2009, track 3)

Overall: sex

Explicit: Shame on me to need release, I wanna go all the way, taking my freak tonight, show all the dirt I got running through my mind, lately people got me all tied up there's a countdown waiting for me to erupt, Ive been told who I should do it with to keep both my hands above the blanket

Subliminal: empowered woman, sick of being told what to do, fights the stereotype that women shouldn't need sexual release

Fuckin Perfect (Pink et al., 2010, track 18)

Overall: empowerment

Explicit: dug my way out blood and fire, bad decisions, that's alright, welcome to my silly life, mistreated, misplace, misunderstood, miss now way its all good, didn't slow me down, mistaken always second guessing underestimated, Ive done all I can think of chased down all my demons, I swallowed the dear, the only thing I should be drinking is an ice cold beer, so cool in line and we tried but we try too hard, and it a waste of my time, done looking for the critics cuz they're everywhere they don't like my jeans, they don't get my hair, estrange ourselves and we do it all the time, why do we do that why do I do that?

Subliminal: woman fighting against society's view of her, empowerment

Till the world ends (Gottwald et al., 2011, track 2)

Overall:

Explicit: this kittins, Im dying for company, I notice thay you got it, you notice that I want it, you know that I cant take it to the next level, baby. Good bitch, sicker than a remeix baby let me blow your mind, I can't take it, take no more, never felt like this before, come on get me, get me on the floor, watch me move when I lose it hard, get you off with the touch dancing in the dark, you notice what im wearing I notice that youre staring, you know that I can take it baby, next one on my hit list, we aint stopping keep on dancing till the world ends

Subliminal: self-objectifying: kitten, refers to self as bitch, female depiction herself as sexually aggressive and expressive

S&M (Eriksen, Hermansen, Wilhem and Dean, 2011, track 1)

Overall: sexual

Explicit: Feels so good being bad, there's no way I'm turning back, now the pain is my pleasure love is great, love is fine, the affliction of the feeling leaves me wanting more, Cause I may be bad but I'm perfectly good at it sex in the air I don't care I love the smell of it, sticks and stone may break my bones but chains and whips excite me

Subliminal: dominatrix

Stereo hearts (McCoy et al. 2011, track 4)

Overall: love song

Explicit: the last girl that played me left a couple cracks, thought love was dead but you're your changing my mind it beats for you make me your radio, turn me up when you feel low, this melody was meant for you

Subliminal: girl, player, changing his mind, object of love song

Fuck you (Brown et al., 2010, track 3)

Overall: angry break up song

Explicit: Ill take her right away, my chick I think you are just mad because she's not your bitch, she can do bad all by her dam self you know that when the bill come, red on the bottom of her Christian Louboutins, she won't let your love turn into a bum, what the fuck you think she is dumb!, the girl I love, and fuck her too, I'm sorry I can't afford a Ferrari but that don't mean I can't get you there, I guess he's an xbox and I'm more Atari but the way you play your game ain't fair, I pity the fool that falls in love with you(oh shit she's a gold digger) I had to borrow beg and steal and lie and cheat trying to keep ya I'm trying to please ya cause being in love with you ass ain't cheap,

Subliminal: bitch, gold digger

Raise your glass (Pink et al., 2010, track 7)

Overall: party

Explicit: We're going to lose our mind tonight, I love when its all too much 5 a.m. turn the radio up, party crasher panty snatcher, call me up if you're a gangsta, so raise your glass if you are wrong in all the right ways all my underdogs, we will never be never be anything but loud and nitty gritty dirty little freaks, slam, slam oh hot damn what part of party don't you understand wish you'd just freak out, I should be locked up right on the spot, its so on right now, oh shit my class is empty

Subliminal: self-proclaimed party girl, breaks female gender stereotypes: aggressive, drinking, cussing, fights against social norms.

Tonight, Tonight (Hot Chelle Rae, 2011, track 2)

Overall: Party song

Explicit: my girlfriend went and cheated on me, shells a California dime but its time for me to quit her.

Subliminal: cheating, good looking woman

The Edge of Glory (Germanotta et al., 2011, track 14)

Overall: love sex

Explicit: there ain't no reason you and me should be alone and I got a reason that you're who should take me home tonight, I need a man that thinks its right when its so wrong, right in the limits where we know we both belong tonight, I'm gonna run right to the end with you where we can both fall far in love, I'm on the edge of glory and I'm hanging on a moment of truth and I'm hanging on a moment with you I'm on the edge, I'm on the edge with you, another shot before we kiss the other side, I'm on the edge of something final we call life tonight

Subliminal: Sexually assertive, wants to fall in love

Lighters (Mathers et al., 2011, track 7)

Overall; inspirational

Explicit: only one reference to woman: y'all buggin out like wendy williams staring at a bee-hive

Subliminal:

You make me feel (Mac and Wroldsen, 2011, track 2)

Overall: sex

Explicit: Male: Girl I've been all over the world looking for you, Im known for taking what I think I deserve and you're overdue, and if you listen you can hear me through the radio in that bright white noise what I been missing in my life what I been dreaming of you'll be that girl, get a little closer to me girl and you'll understand cause if you want a fuy that know what you need well then I', you r man

Female: everything you want so let me get up there I'm the baddest baby in the atmosphere tell me what you want so we can do just what you like,

Subliminal: girl, submissive, takes on a passive role, man know what's best for her

Good life (Tedder, Kutzel, Zanzanella, and Fisher, 2009, track 6)

Overall: living the good life

Explicit: no reference to woman

Pumped up Kicks (Foster, 2009, track 2)

Overall: coming of age

Explicit: no reference to woman